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C O N F I D E N T I A L CAIRO 004125

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [ASEC](#) [IZ](#) [RS](#) [EG](#) [EUN](#)

SUBJECT: EGYPT CONVOKES CHARGE ON IRAQ PREPCOM PARTICIPATION

Classified by Charge Gordon Gray for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

1. (C) The Charge was convoked late in the afternoon of June 1 by MFA Chief of Cabinet Sameh Shukry (acting for the Foreign Minister, who is overseas). Shukry said he was "disturbed" to have just heard from the Russian ambassador that the U.S. had invited the Russian Federation to participate in Iraq PrepCom meetings the following day in Cairo. Shukry said that the U.S. and Egypt had agreed to maintain "a high degree of transparency" to ensure smooth coordination of the PrepCom and facilitate a successful conference in Brussels; a sudden PrepCom invitation to Russia violated that agreement, in his view.

2. (C) Aware of discussion at the UNSC the previous day regarding Russia's strong interest in joining the June 2 Cairo meetings, Ambassador Shukry said he assumed that nothing had been agreed to without Egypt's consent. Hearing the contrary from the Russian ambassador in Cairo led him to convoke the Charge for clarification.

3. (C) The Charge reiterated that Egypt, as the host, had the lead role in determining participation. He added that Russia's approach in New York the day before had reportedly been forceful, but that his understanding -- based on his morning meeting with U.S. delegation leader Ambassador Jones -- was that Iraq would request Egypt to allow Russian participation. Shukry said he had met earlier in the day with the Iraqi delegate, who had not raised the issue of Russian participation beyond a somewhat half-hearted question about the participation of 25 observers, including Russia, from "the original list." The Iraqi "did not imply a request to invite Russia" in particular. The Russian Ambassador had nonetheless subsequently called, according to Shukry, to say that he had "an invitation from the U.S."

4. (C) Shukry asked the USG to sort out the question of Russian participation, floating the option of 25 observers joining the June 2 meetings as one solution if Russia had to be included. The Charge noted the inadvisability of such an option.

5. (C) Comment: Shukry was particularly upset that the issue of participation appeared uncertain in spite of that topic having been discussed in numerous teleconferences among coordinators. He was displeased with the awkward nature of Russia's claim to an invitation, an issue which will hopefully not sour further coordination of the PrepCom. End comment.

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GRAY